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261358Z Apr 00

CONFIDENTIAL PTQ4670

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ACTION AF-00

INFO	LOG-00	NP-00	AID-00	ACQ-00	CIAE-00	SMEC-00	INL-01
	DINT-00	DODE-00	DOEE-00	DOTE-00	SRPP-00	DS-00	EB-00
	EUR-01	FAAE-00	FBIE-00	VC-01	H-01	TEDE-00	INR-00
	IO-00	LAB-01	L-00	AC-01	DCP-01	NSAE-00	OIC-02
	OMB-01	OPIC-01	PA-00	PM-00	PRS-00	ACE-00	P-00
	SP-00	IRM-00	STR-00	TRSE-00	USIE-00	R-00	PMB-00
	DSCC-00	PRM-01	DRL-02	G-00	NFAT-00	SAS-00	/014W

-----501930 261354Z /38

FM AMEMBASSY HARARE
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 5866
INFO AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
AMEMBASSY LONDON
NSC WASHDC

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 HARARE 002237

SIPDIS

DEPT FOR AF A/S SUSAN RICE, AF/S RENDER, BOOTH, GURNEY

NSC FOR SENIOR AFRICA DIRECTOR GAYLE SMITH

LONDON FOR PFLAUMER

PARIS FOR BISA WILLIAMS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 04/26/00
TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PREL](#) [PHUM](#) [PINR](#) [KDEM](#) [PINS](#) [ZI](#)
SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR/TSVANGIRAI MEETING: MDC URGING
RESTRAINT IN FACE OF ESCALATING ELECTION VIOLENCE, BUT
INCHING TOWARDS A DEFENSIVE STRATEGY

REF: HARARE 1970

CLASSIFIED BY POLITICAL OFFICER MAKILA JAMES, REASONS
1.5 B/D.

1. (C) SUMMARY: IN THE RUN-UP TO THE PARLIAMENTARY
ELECTION, THE MDC IS CONFRONTING INCREASING POLITICAL
VIOLENCE FROM ZANU-PF, WHICH HAS LEFT FIVE OF THE
OPPOSITION PARTY'S SUPPORTERS DEAD AND HUNDREDS OF RURAL
AND URBAN BACKERS INJURED. NEVERTHELESS, MDC PRESIDENT
MORGAN TSVANGIRAI BELIEVES THE ELECTION WILL LIKELY GO
FORWARD IN JUNE. THE OPPOSITION PARTY SAYS IT IS
STRONGLY URGING RESTRAINT AMONG ITS MEMBERS AND BELIEVES
IT WILL STILL TAKE A MAJORITY OF THE PARLIAMENTARY
SEATS. THE MDC, HOWEVER, IS UNDER PRESSURE FROM ITS
MEMBERSHIP TO TAKE A MORE DEFENSIVE POSTURE AND HAS
RECENTLY HINTED THAT IT IS MOVING IN THAT DIRECTION. A
CONFLICT BETWEEN LONDON'S LABOR AND CONSERVATIVE PARTIES
IS BLOCKING A COHERENT RESPONSE TO ZIMBABWE'S DOMESTIC
PROBLEMS OR SUPPORT FOR THE MDC, ACCORDING TO
TSVANGIRAI. THE MDC PRESIDENT CRITICIZED THE U.S. FOR

SIPDIS

WHAT HE PERCEIVED TO BE OUR EMPHASIS ON ENGAGING MUGABE
ON THE DROC CRISIS AT THE EXPENSE OF PRESSING HIM ON THE
COUNTRY'S DOMESTIC PROBLEMS. THE MDC SEES MUGABE AS
ALMOST OBSOLETE AND IS FOCUSED ON WORKING OUT AN AMNESTY
DEAL FOR KEY MILITARY FIGURES TO FORESTALL MORE
VIOLENCE. SOUTH AFRICA IS UNABLE TO INFLUENCE MUGABE
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BECAUSE OF PRESIDENT MBEKI'S JUNIOR POSITION, ALTHOUGH
THE FAILURE TO DO SO IS INVITING ECONOMIC DISASTER FOR
PRETORIA, THE MDC LEADER ASSERTED. THE MDC SEEKS
CONTINUED U.S. INSISTENCE ON THE GOVERNMENT'S RESPECT
FOR THE RULE OF LAW AND HUMAN RIGHTS. END SUMMARY.

POLITICAL VIOLENCE ESCALATING

2. (C) MOVEMENT FOR DEMOCRATIC CHANGE PRESIDENT (MDC),
MORGAN TSVANGIRAI, ACCOMPANIED BY LOCAL BUSINESSMAN AND
MDC OFFICIAL CLIVE PUZEY, CALLED ON AMBASSADOR MCDONALD
ON APRIL 25 TO DISCUSS THE ESCALATING POLITICAL VIOLENCE
IN ZIMBABWE. IN THE LAST FEW WEEKS SUCH VIOLENCE HAS
GONE FROM PHYSICAL ATTACKS AND GENERAL INTIMIDATION OF
VOTERS, TO MURDERS OF BLACK FARM WORKERS, WHITE
COMMERCIAL FARMERS, AND OPPOSITION SUPPORTERS. A TOTAL
OF FIVE MDC SUPPORTERS HAVE BEEN KILLED IN POLITICAL
VIOLENCE TO DATE, MOST RECENTLY THREE BACKERS WERE
BEATEN TO DEATH IN HARARE, SHAMVA, AND ANOTHER PERI-
URBAN AREA, THE MDC LEADER INFORMED. TSVANGIRAI
BELIEVES THE FARM VIOLENCE HAS BEEN ORCHESTRATED TO

SHIFT THE FOCUS FROM ZANU-PF'S LIKELY ELECTORAL DEFEAT
TO THE EMOTIONAL LAND REFORM ISSUE.

13. (C) OVER THE NEXT TWO WEEKS TSVANGIRAI PREDICTS THE
POLITICAL VIOLENCE WILL INCREASE. HE STATED THAT THE
FEARED "FIFTH BRIGADE" ARMY MEMBERS, WHO WERE
RESPONSIBLE FOR THE "GUKURUHUNDI" MASSACRES IN
MATABELELAND AND THE MIDLANDS IN THE EARLY 1980'S, HAVE
AGAIN BEEN UNLEASHED ON THE CIVILIANS IN THOSE PARTS OF
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THE COUNTRY, AND POSSIBLY ELSEWHERE. PUZEY ENVISIONS A
RETURN TO THE DAYS WHEN THE COUNTRY LIVED IN TERROR
BECAUSE OF THE DEGREE AND SEVERITY OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE
THAT RESULTED IN "TRAINLOADS" OF VICTIMS BEING
TRANSPORTED FOR BURIALS BY THEIR FAMILIES. THE VIOLENCE
THAT THE GOVERNMENT IS ORGANIZING AND/OR CONDONING IS
DESIGNED TO CREATE TERROR, ERODE MDC SUPPORT AND ENSURE
THE RULING PARTY OF AN ELECTORAL VICTORY IN ITS
HISTORICALLY LOYAL RURAL AREAS WHOSE SUPPORT IS NOW IN
DOUBT. IN SEPARATE MEETINGS, MDC SUPPORTERS HAVE
DOWNPLAYED THE LIKELIHOOD OF MUGABE DECLARING A "STATE
OF EMERGENCY," AS THE RULING PARTY'S STRATEGY SEEMS MORE
FOCUSED ON GUARANTEEING AN ELECTORAL VICTORY TO